

TOWN OF CHATHAM
488 State Route 295, Chatham, NY 12037

Town Board Meeting Tentative Agenda
Thursday, December 21, 2023 @ 6:30PM

This Meeting is IN PERSON (Town Hall) For Board Members With the Exception of the Occurrence of Extraordinary Circumstances

IN PERSON and VIRTUAL for the Public

Google Meet: meet.google.com/tqz-efzm-xbh Join By Phone: (US) +1 224-814-1308 PIN: 632 413 079#

PRESENT

Councilman Donal Collins, Councilmembers Vance Pitkin, Abi Mesick, Destiny Hallenbeck, Rick Werwaiss, Town Clerk Beth Anne Rippel, Town Attorney, Tal Rappleyea, Highway Superintendent James Fetzer

- **RECORDING NOTICE**

- Supervisor Collins called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

1. HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
2. Swearing In January 1st 11am
3. Our Deepest Thanks to Honorable James Forster for 12 years of service in the Chatham Town Court
4. Our Pride, Gratitude and Admiration to Vance and Abi for 4 years of Town Board (and so much more) service

Hallenbeck- \$25 million grant program from Senator Hinchey, information on her website.

- **CORRESPONDENCE:**

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Copake | Re: Stop Hecate |
| 2. Chatham | Re: Traffic Safety Update |
| 3. Houseman Ave | Re: Free Store Donation |
| 4. Chatham Center | Re: Farewell |

- **SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. Broadband Committee- (Councilman Pitkin/Councilwoman Hallenbeck)
Did not meet. Focus on getting more members and refocus themselves. Thank you Vance. Vance-

Rick has signed on to education on 5G. There is so much information out there it's difficult to slog through it all and thank you Rick for picking up the mantle.

2. CAP (Chatham Agricultural Partnership)- (Supervisor Collins) Presented their Plan. Looking for new members also.
3. Climate Smart/Action Task Force Committee- (Councilman Werwaiss)
Didn't meet this month-handing the committee to Angus. Want to look at the town of New Lebanon, lessons to learn from them and road map to follow. Wants to focus on solar law and work with ZIC.
4. Communications Committee- (Councilwoman Mesick)
Last newsletter is out. Final installment is Red Rock.
5. Comprehensive Plan Update Review Committee- (Councilwoman Mesick)
Some members want to continue on to the Zoning Update Committee. Hallenbeck thanked Abi
6. Finance & Planning Committee- (Supervisor Collins)
Didn't meet.
7. Housing Committee- (Councilwoman Hallenbeck/Councilwoman Mesick)
Didn't meet. Refocus going forward. Wants to keep the survey going. Pursue housing on town land. Wants to double the progress they've made in the next year.
8. Parks & Recreation Committee- (Councilman Pitkin/Supervisor Collins)
Didn't meet. Ending his term as co chair with Tim Mackerer (best guy to co chair) It has been a privilege and a delight to be on the committee and we've accomplished so much. Tim added that it's been a pleasure. Donal thanked the co chairs for coming out for Winterfest in the Village to give hayrides.
9. Grants Appropriations Committee (Councilman Werwaiss)
Didn't meet. Superstar on the Committee is Bonnie. Werwaiss will ask her if she wants to be the chair of the committee. Collins thanked the whole committee
10. CAC (Councilman Werwaiss)
Look at Ancrams site.
11. Invasive Species Awareness Committee (Councilwoman Mesick)
Didn't meet. Coming up with a self guided tour for the invasive species in the Park. Lots of ideas from that committee
Werwaiss-regarding this plot of land in front of the town hall: we should consider turning it into a pollinator garden. Maybe make this happen in the spring.
Abi-Traffic Safety Committee Sgt. McMahon was going to talk to us about radar. A member was not sure this was a useful use of their time. So he didn't address the group, the Committee canceled the SGTs presentation. Abi said that when there is someone interested in speaking to the group then we should let them come out to talk to us. We understand more when we have information. Think about public perception, the town board might have to steer it a bit..
12. Town & County (Supervisor Collins)
Donal's lengthy report online.

Abi-regarding the Community Preservation Fund: I don't know if everyone in this room was in favor or not in favor, but it's an amazing thing that was done here and it took a lot of people and the community effort (for Ingrid again was a Powerhouse) and we have made history here. We're the first in Columbia County and hopefully others will fall. I don't know if the state might make it easier for municipalities so they don't have to get special enabling legislation. Hats off to everyone that was involved that voted to help make it happen. Collins- thank you Abi because Abi and Troy resuscitated a conversation that went dormant in 2020. Abi and Troy came before

that town board at the time and that's what we moved ahead and got it all done. Fantastic effort we've made history here

- **REPORTS ON FILE:**

1. Assessor
2. Code Enforcement/Building Inspector
3. Dog Control
4. Environmental Mgt Council
5. Finance Department
6. Highway Department
7. Justice Court
8. Office of the Aging Advisory Board
9. Recreation Director
10. Supervisor's Report
11. Town Clerk

- **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Farmer of the Year Award (Chatham Agricultural Partnership Directive, Seminal Honor)
 - Donna Staron
2. Grievance Day- We share our Assessor with 3 towns. We may shift grievance day back to 4th Tuesday in April
3. Highway Equipment Purchase/Trade-In
Fetzer is looking to trade in old equipment and make some new purchases.

- **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. 2023 Town of Chatham Agricultural Protection Plan Update-Adoption
2. Traffic Safety Working Group- Decoy
Rick has mentioned this. Collins tasked the Group with exploring a decoy car. **MOTION** made by Collins, second by Werwaiss and carried.
3. Spangler Bridge-presentation in a month or 2. A couple of nonprofits are looking to connect the Village to the Albany Hudson Electric Trail. The County has closed the bridge. (Due to disrepair.) Donal said that it is a County owned bridge and they said they will not abandon it to a 501c3, only to a municipality. That would be something that the Town would have to bear the brunt of. No reason why NYS Parks couldn't take ownership as per Werwaiss.
4. Zoning Update Committee- Donal- zoning update committee having mentioned a number of committee members that were on the comp plan update and would like to continue. Obviously we have an incoming board member in the back that was on that we certainly like to lead us forward. Collins wondered if anyone had any objection, until we named this committee on the organizational meeting, to them still being able to do work should they need to within the next 10 days? As the comp plan updates shifts in the zoning without specifically designating the zoning committee until the organizational meeting, let's say they were tasked with something from the planner concerning zoning. Does anyone have an issue with them working on Zoning without being formally appointed? Members who were on the Comp Plan choose, if selected, to stand on

the Zoning Update Committee. Werwaiss asked if the list had been distributed, Collins said yes a few months ago.

- **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Angus-called Michael Allen

Bobseine-vaguely remembers a discussion about Michael continuing work with the Town. Is there a contract and what's the time frame? Angus-helpful to be able to access documents for that?

Werwaiss wants everyone to see the contract.

Tim Mackerer-we need a trail from the Village to Crellin Park. Is there a way that it can be incorporated? Werwaiss-that would be a separate project. We'd have to talk to the Village

Abi-would like to continue on as a member of the Zoning Update and Community Preservation.

Hallenbeck- on behalf of Hinchey she presented certificates to Abi and Vance. To thank them for their service.

Collins- presented a certificate of recognition to Vance, it's been an absolute pleasure. Pitkin-what a pleasure it's been serving the people of the Town.

Collins-presented a certificate of recognition to Abi. Thank you for your service to the Town.

Hallenbeck will miss having Abi on the Board. AM_

RESOLUTIONS

1. **Resolution#206-23: To Approve the Town Board Minutes.**

WHEREAS, the Chatham Town Board approves the Town Board Minutes for November 2 and 16, 2023
Offered by: Werwaiss, seconded motion: Hallenbeck

VOTE:

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Hallenbeck, Werwaiss **NAY:** None Resolution adopted

2. **Resolution#207-23: To Accept the Town Accountant's Financial Supervisor's Report.**

WHEREAS, the Chatham Town Board accepts the Town Accountant's Financial Supervisor Report for November, 2023.

Offered by: Hallenbeck, seconded motion: Werwaiss

VOTE:

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Hallenbeck, Werwaiss **NAY:** None Resolution adopted

3. **Resolution#208-23: To Accept the Financial Abstract as presented to pay the Town Bills.**

WHEREAS, the Chatham Town Board accepts the Financial Abstract #12A as presented to pay the Town Bills.

Offered by: Pitkin, seconded motion: Hallenbeck

VOTE:

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Hallenbeck, Werwaiss **NAY:** None Resolution adopted

4. **Resolution#209-23: To Renew Licenses for Mobile Home Parks**

WHEREAS, the Town of Chatham Code Enforcement Officer has made the annual mobile home inspections at the following locations:

- Breezy Hill Mobile Home Park, 296 SR 295, Tax Map #56.-1-55

- Gleason's Mobile Home Park, 4106 State Route 203, Tax Map #14.-1-21
- T&S Rock City Holding LLC (Owner of Pleasant View Mobile Home Park), 754 Rock City Road, Tax Map #47.-1-37
- Golden Acres Mobile Home Park (Formerly WB Gile's Mobile Home Park), 667 White Mills Road, Tax Map #45.-1-19
- Creekside, 4106 SR 203, Tax Map #14.1-30

WHEREAS, after the annual inspections of said mobile home parks, the Town of Chatham Code Enforcement Officer recommends to the Town Board that the mobile home licenses be renewed for each of the Mobile Home Parks listed above, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Chatham Town Board authorizes the license renewals for said Mobile Home Parks for the period of January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

Offered by: Mesick, seconded motion: Pitkin

Rent in the mobile home park has increased and it's unsustainable. Hallenbeck will recuse herself from this vote because she lives there. Werwaiss-if you take the time to go through these results, they have alarming things on these reports, some of these facilities are in disrepair. Mesick-there are derelict properties all over town and it seems we are putting mobile home parks under scrutiny; we should scrutinize everyone. Hallenbeck-wants to see things brought up to code and help to residents in the Parks.

VOTE:

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Werwaiss **NAY:** None Resolution adopted Hallenbeck-recused herself.

5. **Resolution#210-23: To Authorize Supervisor to sign agreement with Columbia County MIS Dept**

WHEREAS, the Town of Chatham wishes to take part in the Columbia County's Shared Services initiative in an effort to realize savings to the town and county taxpayers, and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has authorized the County Management Information Services (MIS) Department as the Town's technology service provider at an hourly rate of \$70.00 per hour for the services rendered billed in 15-minute increments, and

WHEREAS, the Town Board authorizes the Supervisor to sign the Shared Services Agreement for 2024 which will run from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024 and may be terminated upon 30 days prior written notice, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Town Board authorizes the Supervisor to sign the County MIS Shared Services Agreement insofar as this agreement shall be for one year from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024 at an hourly rate of \$70.00 for services rendered, billed in 15 minute increments.

Offered by: Mesick, seconded motion: Hallenbeck

VOTE:

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Hallenbeck, Werwaiss **NAY:** None Resolution adopted

6. **Resolution#211-23: To Adopt the 2023 Agricultural Protection Plan Update**

WHEREAS, the Town of Chatham has been served by a long standing citizens advisory committee known as the Chatham Agricultural Partnership (CAP), and

WHEREAS CAP has been responsible for the development of the 2009 Agricultural Protection Plan and its 2023 Update, and

WHEREAS, these plans have each identified the challenges to contemporary farming within the Town, and

WHEREAS the 2023 update offers goals and recommendations to the Town to ensure Chatham agriculture be robust and sustainable for generations to come, and

WHEREAS the Chatham Agricultural Partnership has offered its 2023 Agricultural Protection Plan to the Town Board for review, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of Chatham hereby adopts the 2023 Agricultural Protection Plan for the Town moving forward.

Offered by: Mesick, seconded motion: Werwaiss

Werwaiss-the original plan that was approved by the town and then approved by both the county and department of Ag and Markets, (or adopted by them):. Are we moving forward on those two fronts as well with this? Collins- It's not necessary for the update.

VOTE:

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Hallenbeck, Werwaiss **NAY:** None Resolution adopted

7. **Resolution#212-23: To Create a “Farmer of the Year Award” and Name Donna Staron its First Honoree**

WHEREAS, the Town of Chatham has a been served by a long-standing citizens advisory committee known as the Chatham Agricultural Partnership (CAP), and

WHEREAS CAP has been responsible for the development of the 2009 and 2023 Agricultural Protection Plan and 2023 Community Preservation Plan, and

WHEREAS, a directive stemming from the Agricultural Protection Plans calls on the Town to create a “Farmer of the Year Award,” and

WHEREAS the Town Board of the Town of Chatham would like to honor its outstanding farmers by developing such an award, and

WHEREAS, at the recommendation of CAP the Town Board of the Town of Chatham would like to recognize Donna Staron as its first ever “Farmer of the Year,” for her decades of service to the Town, and

WHEREAS this service includes but is not limited to: the development of the Town’s 2009 Comprehensive Plan and its 2023 Update, the development of the Town’s 2009 Agricultural Protection Plan and 2023 Update, the development of the 2023 Community Preservation Plan, and decades of providing the Chatham, Columbia County and upstate New York communities with endless quantities of fresh fruits and vegetables, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of Chatham hereby creates a “Farmer of the Year Award”, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Town Board of the Town of Chatham names Donna Staron of Staron Farm as its first ever honoree of the award for her decades of service to the Community.

Offered by: Everyone seconded motion: Everyone

VOTE:

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Hallenbeck, Werwaiss **NAY:** None Resolution adopted

8. **Resolution#213-23: To Authorize Purchase of Excavator with Trade-in**

WHEREAS, the Superintendent of Highway has requested that the Town Board authorize the purchase of (One) CAT 305 Next Generation Excavator with Work Tools on NYS OGS Contract# PC96406 for the total sum of \$89,369.00, and

WHEREAS, the Superintendent of Highway has requested to remove from Highway Inventory and trade-in the following totaling \$88,000.00 towards purchase:

- Case CX80 Excavator: \$30,000.00
- Case 865 Grader: \$30,000.00
- Case 885 Grader: \$20,000.00
- Bomag Roller: \$8,000.00
- **TOTAL TRADE-IN: \$88,000.00**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Chatham Town Board authorizes the purchase of (One) CAT 305 Next Generation Excavator with Work Tools on NYS OGS Contract# PC96406 for the sum of \$89,369.00, minus trade-in of \$88,000.00, leaving a balance of \$1,369.00 to be expensed from the 2023 Budget (DB5130.2).

Offered by: Mesick, seconded motion: Hallenbeck

Pitkin-Caught our Highway Superintendent inspecting culverts after dark, he's impressed with his dedication.

VOTE:

AYE: Collins, Pitkin, Mesick, Hallenbeck, Werwaiss **NAY:** None Resolution adopted

• **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Tim Mackerer- We need smaller lot sizes for the potential to build wealth and equity. When we look at affordable housing the last thing we should be doing is trapping people in.

Hallenbeck-you're not stepping up from a mobile home.

Mesick-It seems like mobile homes do serve the purpose not obviously for building equity but as a placeholder and hopefully the housing committee and the zoning committee are going to work really hard to figure out a lot of other affordable housing choices. We shouldn't vilify parks because right now it's the only game in town, but as Destiny's pointing out. It's not even affordable anymore. We're really in a crisis.

Hallenbeck-we need dignified workforce housing.

Tim-n regards to Spangler Bridge: Has anyone talked to the County about this bridge? Is the bridge rated? Collins-The County has looked at it and it's a very low priority right now. This could become a very expensive proposition.

Collins-want to bring attention to Vance and Abi for four very interesting years. We went through COVID and for us was just a massive amount of work. Collins thanked everyone that sits on our committees and contributes to the town Donna ten here today Angus John and our town attorney Tom Rappleyea who likes to stay back from the limelight but thank you so much for helping us on the real estate transfer tax form.

• **MOTION TO CLOSE MEETING**

At 7:54PM was made by Werwaiss, seconded by Hallenbeck and carried.

Respectfully submitted by,

Beth Anne Rippel, Town Clerk